11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

[post-World War II period]

As the politicians grew skilful at the game of metropolitan politics, their power increasingly eclipsed that of their chiefly benefactors and of local French administrators. For example:

> A local chef de poste summoned the district chiefs to bring their potential draftees for the war in Algeria early in the morning on a specific date to be examined by medical officers. Those chiefs who looked upon any summons with a trepidation born of their past experience with prewar administrators, arrived at the headquarters as early as 5:30 A.M. on the morning in question, bringing their young men with them. Many of these chiefs, whose only means of transportation was their slow-moving ceremonial horse, spent the night en route to be there at dawn. More sophisticated chiefs coming from similar distances left on the same morning and arrived at about 8:00 A.M., the hour when the administrator himself was first seen stirring in his residence. One chief, a war veteran, rode up on his bicycle at about 8:45 A.M. in a most unchiefly manner and became the butt of jokes from the other waiting chiefs. Another district chief, who was an elected representative, did not arrive until about 9:30 A.M., and he was greeted on arrival by the administrator. This man had only about half a mile to travel, and he did so in his car. His colleagues greeted him with a mixture of jokes, feigned awe, and surprise, and some of them addressed him as "Mogho Naba" and "Governor."[79]

Another example of the shift in the balance of power was the relationship that developed between Joseph Conombo and the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou. The Mogho Naba had nominated and supported Conombo as a candidate for deputy to the National Assembly. He was elected, and later became Secretary of the Interior in the Mendès-France Government of 1954. He thus had access to power undreamed of by the Mogho Naba. Being a Moaga as well as a good politician, he never flaunted his authority before his traditional chief; nor did the Mogho Naba try to exercise his traditional powers over him. But their behavior toward each other clearly demonstrated that they were both aware of the shift in power, even though they were both too wise and too polite to make an issue of it.

Other political forces also jeopardized the position of the chiefs. For example, as head of the Union Voltaïque, Conombo had an honored position within a Paris-based African parliamentary group called the Indépendants d'Outre-Mer (IOM). He would have held an even more important position within this group if he had had wider support among the non-Mossi in the Upper Volta. But his power was limited by the presence and competition of the MDV, which, while Mossi-supported, was anti-chief; the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution Africaine (MPA), an anti-Mossi and anti-RDA party formed in 1954 by Nazi Boni of the Bobo ethnic group and supported by some officials in the administration; and the Parti Démocratique Voltaïque (PDV), a local branch of a now less radical RDA